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8
9 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
10 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

11 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
12
Plaintiff,
13
v.
14 ARMANDO LUCIANO CHAVEZ, JR.,
15
Defendant.
16

CASE NO. 1:20-CR-00218-NONE

STIPULATION REGARDING EXCLUDABLE
TIME PERIODS UNDER SPEEDY TRIAL ACT;
FINDINGS AND ORDER

DATE: January 20, 2021
TIME: 1:00 p.m.
COURT: Hon. Sheila K. Oberto

17 This case is set for a status conference on January 20, 2021. This Court has issued a series of
18 General Orders to address public health concerns related to COVID-19 and to suspend jury trials in the
19 Eastern District of California, including most recently General Order 628.

20 Although the General Orders address the district-wide health concern, the Supreme Court has
21 emphasized that the Speedy Trial Act's end-of-justice provision "counteract[s] substantive
22 openendedness with procedural strictness," "demand[ing] on-the-record findings" in a particular case.
23 *Zedner v. United States*, 547 U.S. 489, 509 (2006). "[W]ithout on-the-record findings, there can be no
24 exclusion under" § 3161(h)(7)(A). *Id.* at 507. Moreover, any such failure cannot be harmless. *Id.* at
25 509; *see also United States v. Ramirez-Cortez*, 213 F.3d 1149, 1153 (9th Cir. 2000) (explaining that a
26 judge ordering an ends-of-justice continuance must set forth explicit findings on the record "either orally
27 or in writing").

28 Based on the plain text of the Speedy Trial Act—which *Zedner* emphasizes as both mandatory

1 and inexcusable—General Orders 611, 612, and 617 require specific supplementation. Ends-of-justice
 2 continuances are excludable only if “the judge granted such continuance on the basis of his findings that
 3 the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the
 4 defendant in a speedy trial.” 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Moreover, no such period is excludable unless
 5 “the court sets forth, in the record of the case, either orally or in writing, its reason or finding that the
 6 ends of justice served by the granting of such continuance outweigh the best interests of the public and
 7 the defendant in a speedy trial.” *Id.*

8 The General Orders exclude delay in the “ends of justice.” 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7) (Local Code
 9 T4). Although the Speedy Trial Act does not directly address continuances stemming from pandemics,
 10 natural disasters, or other emergencies, this Court has discretion to order a continuance in such
 11 circumstances. For example, the Ninth Circuit affirmed a two-week ends-of-justice continuance
 12 following Mt. St. Helens’ eruption. *Furlow v. United States*, 644 F.2d 764 (9th Cir. 1981). The court
 13 recognized that the eruption made it impossible for the trial to proceed. *Id.* at 767-68; *see also United*
 14 *States v. Correa*, 182 F. Supp. 326, 329 (S.D.N.Y. 2001) (citing *Furlow* to exclude time following the
 15 September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the resultant public emergency). The coronavirus is posing a
 16 similar, albeit more enduring, barrier to the prompt proceedings mandated by the statutory rules.

17 In light of the societal context created by the foregoing, this Court should consider the following
 18 case-specific facts in finding excludable delay appropriate in this particular case under the ends-of-
 19 justice exception, § 3161(h)(7) (Local Code T4).¹ If continued, this Court should designate a new date
 20 for the status conference. *United States v. Lewis*, 611 F.3d 1172, 1176 (9th Cir. 2010) (noting any
 21 pretrial continuance must be “specifically limited in time”).

22 STIPULATION

23 Plaintiff United States of America, by and through its counsel of record, and defendant, by and
 24 through defendant’s counsel of record, hereby stipulate as follows:

- 25 1. By previous order, this matter was set for status on January 20, 2021.
- 26 2. By this stipulation, defendant now moves to continue the status conference until June 2,

27
 28 ¹ The parties note that General Order 612 acknowledges that a district judge may make
 “additional findings to support the exclusion” at the judge’s discretion. General Order 612, ¶ 5 (E.D.
 Cal. March 18, 2020).

2021, and to exclude time between January 20, 2021, and June 2, 2021, under Local Code T4.

3. The parties agree and stipulate, and request that the Court find the following:

a) The government has represented that the discovery associated with this case includes investigative reports, numerous photographs and videos, cellular phone extractions, laboratory test results, and other items. All this discovery has been either produced directly to counsel and/or made available for inspection and copying.

b) Counsel for defendant desires additional time consult with their clients, conduct further investigation, review the voluminous discovery, and to continue to explore a potential resolution of the case. All these activities have been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic and Defendant's participation in the WestCare in-patient program. Specifically, because defendant is currently in the treatment program, access to counsel has been restricted. Moreover, external investigation of the case has been hampered by quarantines and social distancing restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

c) Counsel for defendant believes that failure to grant the above-requested continuance would deny him/her the reasonable time necessary for effective preparation, taking into account the exercise of due diligence.

d) The government does not object to the continuance.

e) Based on the above-stated findings, the ends of justice served by continuing the case as requested outweigh the interest of the public and the defendant in a trial within the original date prescribed by the Speedy Trial Act.

f) For the purpose of computing time under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161, et seq., within which trial must commence, the time period of January 20, 2021 to June 2, 2021, inclusive, is deemed excludable pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A), B(iv) [Local Code T4] because it results from a continuance granted by the Court at defendant's request on the basis of the Court's finding that the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial.

4. Nothing in this stipulation and order shall preclude a finding that other provisions of the Speedy Trial Act dictate that additional time periods are excludable from the period within which a trial

1 must commence.

2 IT IS SO STIPULATED.

3
4 Dated: January 15, 2021

5 MCGREGOR W. SCOTT
United States Attorney

6
7 /s/ JUSTIN J. GILIO
JUSTIN J. GILIO
8 Assistant United States Attorney

9 Dated: January 15, 2021

10 /s/ Dan Harralson
DAN HARRALSON
11 Counsel for Defendant
Armando Luciano Chavez, Jr.

12
13 **FINDINGS AND ORDER**

14
15 IT IS SO ORDERED.

16 Dated: January 15, 2021

17 /s/ Sheila K. Oberto
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE